

WORLDVIEW PROJECTED FROM THE QUR’ANIC OUTLOOK

KUR’ÂN’IN BAKIŞ AÇISINDAN ÇIKAN DÜNYA GÖRÜŞÜ

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Abstract:

Worldviews function primarily as general schemes through which we perceive everything, including ourselves. In this respect, their function is to put our conception into a unified whole. Whenever we philosophize, or construct a theory, we inevitably and necessarily, by the very nature of our mind, presuppose a worldview. This function of worldviews is elaborated here with regard to the nature of our faculty of knowledge, and hence, it can be designated as the ‘epistemological function’. I hope that my brief analysis of the Qur’anic outlook leading to a quasi-scientific worldview explains sufficiently its function in the life of Muslim societies.

Key words: Worldviews, Qur’ân, Qur’anic outlook

Öz:

Dünya görüşleri, öncelikle kendimiz de dahil olmak üzere algıladığımız her şeyin genel şemaları olarak işlev görür. Bu bakımdan dünya görüşlerinin işlevleri, anlayışımızı bir bütün haline getirir. Ne zaman felsefe yapsak veya bir teori inşa etsek zihnimizin doğası gereği kaçınılmaz olarak bir dünya görüşü varsayılır. Bu çalışmada dünya görüşlerinin fonksiyonu, bilgi yetimizin doğasıyla ilgili olarak detaylandırıldı, ve bu sebeple 'epistemolojik işlev' olarak adlandırılabilir. Yarı-bilimsel bir dünya görüşüne götüren Kur’ânî bakış açısına ilişkin kısa analizimin, Müslüman toplumların hayatındaki işlevini yeterince açıklayacağını umuyorum.

Anahtar kelimeler: Dünya görüşleri, Kur’ân, Kur’ân’i bakış açısı

1. Introduction

Human behavior springs from a mental ground which can be taken as the mental perspective of all human conduct. The mental framework on which a conduct is directly based may be called its “immediate ground”. There are, however, certain conceptions that may not be directly available in the immediate ground at the time of performing an act. It is possible to trace these conceptions to another mental framework that is broader than the immediate ground. This broader mental scheme will be different depending on the nature of the behaviour performed. For example, when a scientist is engaged in his scientific activity which is primarily knowledge acquisition activity, it must be knowledge related concepts in his mind forming the immediate ground of this activity; as such all these concepts make up a unified understanding of knowledge in general and science in particular in the mind of the scientist. This immediate ground is nothing other than “Scientific Conceptual Scheme” which is general and as such it is grounded in the Knowledge Structure of the scientist’s worldview. In that case, there are many interrelated and perhaps from more general towards more specific frameworks sustain each other in such a way that they are all nested in one another.

If we consider human mind in this way, then we may argue that there is a comprehensive mental framework in our mind which sustains all other frameworks within

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itself. It is this comprehensive mental framework which we call “worldview”. This comprehensive mental framework is formed in our mind after we are born through the natural (*fitrî*) operations of our mind thanks to the regularity of its operations. Everything we learn is stored in our mind in accordance with logical rules and relations which make it possible for us to think *logically* as we bring back this stored knowledge in relation to new issues which are thought in the mind. This would not be possible unless the knowledge stored in our mind form certain regular, coherent and consistent structures. This means that a worldview is not a compilation of concepts in a chaotic order; in other words, whatever mental content that makes up a worldview in our mind is not a hodgepodge compilation. It is rather an orderly unity which forms a specific coherent perspective in our mind. In that case we first need to discover this orderly unity according to which we can decipher the worldview which may be projected in the mind of a person studying and trying to live according to the Qur’anic outlook.

I illustrated this point previously in a scientist’s behaviour with the works of scientists from two different traditions.¹ The network of the technical terms and scientific concepts used in Aristotle’s physics, for instance, constitutes his specific perspective as the immediate ground of his activities in physics, which I called the “Specific Scientific Conceptual Scheme”. It is this immediate ground which was governing his behaviour when he was engaged in his studies in physics. As the specific mental framework of Aristotle in his own particular field, it is grounded in the General Scientific Conceptual Scheme as the inner framework of his physics in the network of scientific concepts and the way they are conceptualized within the Greek scientific tradition of his time. All of these conceptual schemes are grounded in the knowledge structure of his worldview which thus makes up his *Perspective*. We may give another general example from the Islamic scientific tradition: the technical vocabulary and the theological concepts utilized in *kalām* are the Specific Scientific Conceptual Scheme of *kalām* utilized by the members of the community of scholars active in *kalām*, as such it is the immediate ground of their *kalām* activities; the web of the general scientific vocabulary that is utilized by all scholars alike working actively in the Islamic scientific tradition is the Islamic General Scientific Conceptual Scheme, which I called also *Frame*. Finally, the Islamic worldview is the general mental framework of all these activities which we have also called *Perspective*. All of these frameworks form structures in the worldview of a scientist. Since our aim here is to discover the structures in a worldview which shall guide us to decipher that kind of worldview which arises in the mind of a Muslim as a result of his/her Qur’anic education we shall concentrate first on exposing these structures and then try to apply it to the Qur’anic outlook.

2. Worldview and its Orderly Structures

As soon as a human being is born, his mind begins to acquire knowledge and thus gradually begins to form certain frameworks for itself. It is the totality of these frameworks building the perspective of the individual that we call ‘worldview’. From the very first

¹ See *Islamic Scientific Tradition in History* (Kuala Lumpur: IKIM, 2012), 44ff.

inception of a piece of knowledge, the mind begins to work within that framework as it enlarges it through various combinations of knowledge acquired later. The worldview thus becomes the *environment* within which the mind operates, and without which it cannot function at all.² A worldview emerges in the mind of an individual gradually right after the birth. Through the accumulation of experiences in our memory during childhood, our system of knowledge begins to work just like the system of digestion and other systems in human body. Our system of knowledge is able to convert those early experiences into concepts which are again by the operations of the faculties that belong to our knowledge system are organized in our mind. This organization of concepts in a coherent, consistent and orderly manner gradually begins to yield broader cluster of concepts that become doctrinal constructions in the mind as such these concepts become more palpable to the philosophical analysis. In order to distinguish these doctrinal elements of our worldview, they can be termed “*structures*”. We may be able to discern these structures with the help of pure epistemology. The first doctrinal construction that is analyzable in this way is our perception of life and other related concepts that we utilize in daily life, such as customs, family and our identity, immediate values and our culture. The predominant concept in this case is related to our daily life and regulates our daily activities; for this reason I would like to call this doctrinal construction Life Structure.

2.1. The Life Structure

As we grow up, through our education we continually add on our Life Structure which represents our worldview at this stage. Indeed our Life Structure is our mere worldview in early ages. It is possible that a Life Structure may remain as a simple mental construction in which no other doctrinal concepts emerge. In such a situation there is no need of differentiating a Life Structure within the worldview because it is identical with the worldview itself. In other words, the Life Structure is the worldview in this case and we cannot discern a life concept that has achieved the status of doctrinal level. We may also distinguish between worldviews in which there is no structure at all. This means that in such a worldview no concepts have achieved the status of doctrine. Instead, there may be some sophisticated concepts that operate in a simpler manner to fulfill the function of those doctrinal elements. Obviously in such a worldview the human behaviour will not be as sophisticated as the one in which at least some concepts have achieved a degree of sophistication. This is the case in some primitive societies where the culture is not sufficiently developed to provide suitable growth for the worldview of the individuals to develop other doctrinal concepts to form more structures.

We may at this moment try to reflect on a worldview in which the Life Structure becomes so sophisticated in it that at least one idea appears as a doctrine. This doctrine above all will include a fundamental concept which is “knowledge”. Since the worldview itself is knowledge it cannot achieve sophistication without knowledge. Hence, knowledge that is not just everyday information about oneself and things around oneself; rather knowledge that is geared towards learning as well and as such with a definite aim and *some* method can *doctrinize* the concepts of a worldview. I invent the concept “doctrinization” to mean the

² Our exposition of worldview is taken from the above work cited in footnote 1 with some modifications, Chapter 2.

enlightened efforts in the society to enrich the meaning of concepts in such a way that they achieve a doctrinal status, hence they become what I have called above “doctrinal concepts”. In a worldview doctrinization is achieved through only enlightened knowledge as outlined here. Therefore, at the basis of all sophisticated worldviews there is knowledge. Although a worldview achieves sophistication through knowledge the first emergent structure within the Life Structure is not Knowledge Structure. For, when the Life Structure of our worldview is enlightened through knowledge we begin to acquire a different attitude towards life and things around us. This new attitude is actually the reflection of a conception at the level of a doctrine; it is our world conception. This new doctrinal conception may so much develop in a worldview and acquire sufficient sophistication that it becomes an independent mental framework in our mind that it constitutes a new structure. Since this structure projects our world conception it can be termed “World Structure” which defines our identity with a certain degree of abstraction.

2.2. The World Structure

In every World Structure three fundamental concepts have a vital role; the *origins*; the meaning of existence and the destiny. These fundamental concepts express the need for every thinking human being to inquire into the *origins* of everything; but above all of himself and the world. This thought is a conceptual search for identity because a person has folded layers of identity and each layer develops in relation to the sophistication of the worldview of an individual. The first is biological identity which is acquired in all worldviews and as such it involves one’s immediate family. However, if the worldview is developed to be more sophisticated at the level of Life Structure the biological identity will be extended to more relatives to include the whole clan and tribe. But if a World Structure emerges in that worldview then the first abstract identity emerges. This layer of identity is cultural identity. For, at this level the individual begins to question his existence and the origin of the universe in a more sophisticated manner. We cannot yet say that this questioning is scientific. On the other hand, he is no longer content with the kind of knowledge that he acquired through life information from the ancestors. He is questioning that information and coming up with more rational type of knowledge. This leads him to question the meaning of life and his destiny as well as the future of the world. All the knowledge he may acquire in this way constitutes a new outlook on life and human existence, which we call “World Structure” in his worldview.

In this context we are not discussing the structures of worldviews in relation to any specific worldview. That is why it is very hard to express the concepts in an extremely general way in order to embrace all the worldviews. But when we discuss them in relation to the Qur’ān they will I hope become much clearer. As for example with regard to the Qur’ān the following concepts representing the Islamic World Structure become apparent; *tawhīd* (which refers to the creator as One God, source of all existence), *nubuwwah* (expressing the identity of a believer and the meaning of life, as we shall see), *hashr* or *ākhirah* (expressing the human destiny towards the Final Judgment); knowledge (‘*ilm*’ which is the comprehensive knowledge explaining all these concepts as a doctrine of knowledge); justice (embracing all other social values and human relationships within society). It is clear that these concepts are sufficiently

comprehensive to express each a doctrinal that really provide a Muslim with a world conception. The World Structure becomes the foundation of a worldview as soon as it is established as a doctrinal concept expressed with the Qur’anic concept of *‘alam* as in *rabb al-‘alamîn* representing the individual’s world conception.

In one’s earlier life the foundation of his/her worldview is the Life Structure. But now it is pushed aside as a conceptual framework to regulate the person’s everyday dealings and cultural activities; and thus the World Structure becomes the foundation of the worldview. When the World Structure emerges in this way it does not operate independently of the Life Structure because no structure and indeed no concept in our mind and as a result in our worldview can operate independently of each other. When we are engaged in a particular everyday dealing this behaviour is directly connected with our Life Structure which is the immediate ground of that action. But when that structure regulates that particular dealing it will get the relevant concepts, values and perceptions from the World Structure and other related structures, if there are any, and then apply them all in unity to that particular behaviour. Therefore, our treatment of these structures separately is only for the sake of epistemological analysis.

As I have pointed out the World Structure emerges in our worldview through a special kind of knowledge; because of this the development of a worldview is a process that is continuous. It is basically a knowledge process as such it is governed by the human knowledge system which represents our epistemology. When a World Structure emerges within this process the individual begins to have a solid *perspective* from which he can view everything including now the knowledge itself that leads to this perspective. As a result he begins evaluating the concept of knowledge in such a way that it begins to acquire a doctrinal character. When this is fully achieved the fundamental concept of knowledge within the World Structure begins to acquire the character of a doctrine and thus leads to the emergence of the “Knowledge Structure” which begins to function in relation to the Life and World structures.

2.3. The Knowledge Structure

When a concept in a worldview has a comprehensive doctrinal character, it can be separated analytically from the rest of the worldview and its structures as an independent structure. Although it is extremely difficult, it is important to demarcate between the World Structure and Knowledge Structure. However, it is utterly difficult to show where the former ends and the latter begins. What makes this demarcation difficult is in the first place the fact that both structures are built on knowledge and indeed all other structures also emerge through knowledge. Second, a worldview functions as a whole in our knowledge system and thus every structure operates in relation to each other thus geared towards action. On the other hand we may draw a rough line between structures. In this case we may assert that the World Structure ends at the point where knowledge evaluation begins. This way when knowledge itself is evaluated a sophisticated idea gradually begins to emerge in the worldview in such a way that the concept of knowledge no longer means just knowledge in everyday life. It begins to refer to knowledge as related for example to truth and the way we acquire the truth. Thus

the concept of true knowledge and systematic knowledge emerge. This approach leads to perceiving knowledge as a value and its representation as a doctrine of knowledge.

Knowledge Structure of a worldview develops further with learning activities in such a way that gradually it leads to the emergence of a knowledge tradition. As a tradition it begins to have its own values and knowledge customs. This means it will begin to have a moral attitude towards knowledge and truth as fundamental values. The society by this time must have developed some sort of moral sensitivity towards fundamental elements in life and world. This will lead to a moral struggle, the most important of which is to set up a learning institution. This way education is stressed and a new order together with the idea of order begins to develop. This leads to restructuring of political and in turn legal and economic institutions. It seems that when a worldview develops through enlightened knowledge and learning activities there emerge in it at least three structures, Life, World and Knowledge, all of which revolutionize the society. We claim this on the basis of the idea that knowledge is like a living organism if it has its dynamic moral spirit, and thus put the whole society on a dynamic struggle to build a knowledge mechanism in that society through which knowledge shapes the worldview of most of the individuals therein. What emerges as a result of this is a knowledge tradition which expresses the mentality of the dominant worldview in that society towards learning and intellectualism.

As a result of these developments the Knowledge Structure will include important concepts that will prepare the ground for the emergence of sciences. Among these we will find the appearance of the concepts of truth, method and theory which is expressed at this stage as “opinion”. Gradually these concepts will turn into the concepts of the General Scientific Conceptual Scheme that will provide the Frame for the future scientists. It is this scheme that will give birth to individual sciences. When these sciences emerge at the beginning stages it is not possible to distinguish their particular conceptual schemes from their Frame. These two schemes are very much identical at this level. However, as the individual sciences progress their particular schemes also develop as more and more technical terms are invented in them. When these technical terms reach maturity then it is possible to distinguish the Outlook they project in these sciences. We must understand that in the worldview there is Knowledge Structure in which we have the General Scientific Conceptual Scheme as the Frame and within the Frame we have the Specific Scientific Conceptual Scheme as the Outlook. The worldview is the conceptual framework that provides the Perspective to the scientist. If we return what we said at the outset, the Specific Scientific Conceptual Scheme as the Outlook is the immediate mental ground of each science; the General Scientific Conceptual Scheme as the Frame is the scientific mentality and the Knowledge Structure of the worldview is the intellectual mentality; and the worldview, as the perspective of the scientist, is the remote ground of scientific activities.

2.4. The Value and Human Structures

When a worldview has a well established Knowledge Structure it becomes suitable for the rise of sciences as defined above. I believe that after the sciences emerge through the rise of a well established General Scientific Conceptual Scheme then certain concepts found in

other structures such as Life, World and Knowledge Structures will be brought back under scrutiny. Among these concepts the most important ones fall under **morality** and **society** considered as a political order. Since the former is related to a fundamental concept known in philosophy as value, the doctrinal development surrounding all the moral concepts can be termed “Value Structure”. It is possible that this structure emerge prior to the emergence of individual sciences if there is a fundamental stress over the concepts surrounding the value conception in a particular society. It may also be possible for it to emerge simultaneously with the emergence of individual sciences. One must realize that the emergence of these sciences is not like the birth of a human being at a particular date and specific time in history. The birth of these social developments and stages in historical processes may be determined only within the spans of time intervals and in certain cases these intervals may be a century. Therefore, when we say simultaneously we mean within the same span of time.

Moreover, the concepts that fall under society are usually represented by our understanding of human nature. Therefore, the doctrinal concept here is “human being” representing society, political order and economic system and thus we would like to call it Human Structure. These two structures as well as others continually undergo sophistication through the scientific knowledge which subsequently develops in the society. The Value Structure in our mind supports the ethical behaviour and as such represents our moral and legal dealings. Under the Human Structure we find our social, economic and political dealings, all of which develop through scientific knowledge. But these structures have a specific reference to the Life Structure as their related activity concerns the actual life in a society. In a sense we can assert that the sophistication of these structures is through scientific knowledge and as such requires some progress in the related sciences but their application is in the Life Structure through the Knowledge Structure as a function of our knowledge system. As we have pointed out, none of the structures operate independently.

It must be clear that our concept of worldview as an epistemological term claims that our cognitive faculties in our system of knowledge cannot function without such a mental unity. Moreover, it claims that all human behaviour is governed primarily by our worldview. Since science is a systematic process to gain knowledge without the concepts needed for this activity our mind cannot function and thus produce an organized body of knowledge as science. For, we can act only according to the existing concepts in our faculties of knowledge comprising our worldview. These actions are sophisticated in proportionate to their corresponding concepts and other related mental frameworks in the worldview. Therefore, if there is no Value Structure in the mind of a person we cannot expect any legal philosophy, or a legal system from him. He will fulfill these function at a simple level by certain conceptions built in his mind or available to him in the form of customs or coarse culture in his society. The non-existence of a Value Structure, however, does not mean the non-existence of values. It simply means most of these values have not yet been evaluated with sophisticated knowledge in such a way that the concept of value projects a doctrinal status in the worldview of an individual. The same can be said with regard to the Human Structure.

To conclude what I have said in this section, we claim primarily that all human behavior springs, among other things, fundamentally from a comprehensive mental unity which we call ‘fundamental ground of human actions. Since this fundamental ground, as a metaphysical

basis, arises in the mind as a mental unity, we refer to it by a simple term “worldview”. What we want to say is that every human action is, in one way or another, ultimately traceable to a worldview. In order to decipher a worldview, it is therefore more feasible to start from the foundation and then try to infer other structures from the manifestations of that worldview. When we now try to apply this to the Qur’anic outlook, we shall begin from the World Structure and then proceed to Knowledge Structure. Other structures will follow in the order of Value and Human Structures. Life Structure may be considered as a guiding principle rather than an analysis of content. I shall try to give the reasons for this based on the Qur’anic approach.

3. The Application of the Worldview to the Qur’ān

As we have seen, the World Structure of a worldview is a unified vision concerning the individual’s perception of the world built upon some fundamental concepts. If this is well understood then we may decipher the Qur’anic outlook from a general formulation that captures its conception of universe which manifests a worldview in the mind of the faithful with its structures. In order to do this we may try to express the Qur’anic vision of reality and then try to see what concepts correspond to this vision. Those concepts that broadly define this vision will be the fundamental concepts of the World Structure within such a worldview. We may formulate the Qur’anic outlook in the following manner:

Every being is brought into existence by one Omniscient and Omnipotent Creator known as God (*Allah*), Who chose Human beings as His vicegerents on earth. Humans are thus entrusted with God’s covenant as Trust (*amānah*) which brings a responsibility to him. This is the moral obligation that humans owe Him. They will be brought back to questioning for such a responsibility through resurrection. But humans need guidance so that they do not falter in this responsibility. God thus sent his messengers to guide them. The aim of life is to live in accordance with that covenant to fulfill responsibility so that they can take care of the Trust. In order to fulfill this duty in life one needs knowledge, which is given as guidance in *ghayb*, i.e. the universe not available immediately to the human knowledge faculties; but then every person is also endowed with faculties to discover God’s signs (*āyāt*) in the *shahādah*, i.e. the universe available immediately to the human knowledge faculties.

In this formulation we tried to be extremely general and simple so that we can deduce the concepts of the World Structure and perhaps of other structures as well from this Qur’anic outlook. In this formulation, first of all we have a creator as God. Any conception given in relation to God and His uniqueness coalesce in one key concept known in Islamic worldview as *tawhīd*. In the second place, we have an idea of moral, namely, religious responsibility. We would like to assert that most ideas in relation to the moral responsibility are expressed in the concept of “*nubuwwah* (prophethood)” as reflected in the person of Prophet Muhammad (a.s.m.). In fact, the stories of the former prophets in the Qur’ān give us Islam’s conception of religion also. Moreover, since the moral responsibility assumes knowledge and questioning in the hereafter (resurrection) these two concepts are also in the World Structure. This way it is possible to distinguish five fundamental concepts as integral elements in Islamic World

Structure: *tawhîd*, *nubuwwah*, *hashr* as the resurrection of the dead and the concept of Final Judgment, *‘ilm* (knowledge) and finally *‘amal* as moral behavior or good deeds including justice and the *‘ibâdât*, i.e., worship and prayer. Any person who sincerely entertains the doctrinal ideas of the first four and organizes his/her behavior in accordance to this doctrinal understanding has in his/her mind an Islamic worldview. Of course, our system of knowledge functions in such a way that when our faculties begin to organize our ideas and concepts in our mind it does not bring contradictory elements into the architectonic unity of our worldview. As a result, there cannot be concepts and ideas contradicting these doctrinal concepts in the mind of a Muslim. If there is such a contradiction that means that person must have interpreted these doctrinal concepts of the Qur’ân in a way that is coherent with his new cultural terms.

3.1. The World Structure of the Qur’anic Outlook

Based on this interpretation I would like to classify these concepts in accordance with our epistemology of worldviews. I dare to claim that the concepts of *knowledge* and *moral behavior* accumulated so much doctrinal content that it would be hard to keep them in the World Structure. This does not however mean that they are not central to the worldview projected by the Qur’anic outlook. For this reason these two fundamental concepts because of their crucial significance for the Qur’anic outlook form two separate structures within the worldview projected therefrom. Since no worldview can be without a Life Structure we come up with four fundamental structures in this kind of a worldview: Life, World, Knowledge and Value Structures in which we represent the moral behavior as it is intimately related to this concept. On the other hand, within the Value Structure we have morality and law under *al-fiqh* (Islamic Law). Qur’anic understanding of human nature is also established in this structure. But again we face the same problem of doctrinal structure; since the religion is sent as guidance for humans, the central focus is these beings. As a result the doctrine of covenant together with the notion of *khalifa*, vicegerent (of God) leads to a rich doctrinal understanding of human nature which in turn leads to the social and political understanding of Islam. As such we tend to separate the doctrinal concept of human from the Value Structure and put under a new one called “Human Structure”; hence we have been able to derive all the five structures based on the Qur’anic outlook. But we should be careful here: Just because we have been able to base our understanding of these structures in the Qur’anic outlook does not mean that all these structures existed in the mind of the individuals in early Islam. We need more study of that society to prove this. However, since the last three structures of a worldview needs scientific scrutiny and we know that sciences did not emerge in early Muslim community; we can safely assert that Knowledge, Value and Human Structures did not exist as separate doctrinal components in the worldviews of the early Muslims in at least the first half of the Islamic century. Of course these concepts were fundamental for the Qur’anic outlook and hence they existed in a developed form in the World Structure of the worldviews of the first century Muslims. Now let us try to evaluate the main components of the World Structure of the worldview projected by the Qur’anic outlook.

3.1.1. *Tawhîd*

Although this term strictly means monotheism it is usually used in a broader sense which it acquired through its doctrinal usage to include the Qur’anic discussions of God’s existence as well. Hence it can be interpreted as “the existence and uniqueness of God” as manifested in His creation. The Qur’ān over-emphasizes God’s oneness not only because it was sent to a society where polytheism (*shirk*) was widespread but also because humans tend to easily fall into the trap of polytheism; and sometimes unconsciously by raising certain selfish objectives to a divine status. Therefore, a person must be kept on guard if he is to be guided to the absolute uniqueness of God as projected by the Qur’ān to the World Structure of Muslims worldview. The uniqueness of God, however, seems to have been taken for granted by many. For, it is the existence of God that has been an ontological problem for us. The fact that if He exists then He must be one is presupposed by almost every philosopher dealing with the subject. It seems, on the other hand, that the Qur’ān intends something more than ontological oneness. That is why the Qur’anic notion of *tawhîd* must be understood as “strict monotheism” utterly rejecting not only ontological pluralism in deity but also every form of pluralism including worship of material ends for human selfish projections and hoping or living with expectations of help from sources other than God. This strict sense of *tawhîd* is not an ontological problem. It may be regarded either as a theological problem or an ethical one, and as such we shall deal with it in its proper scope. This fact has also given sufficient justification for Muslim thinkers to broaden the scope of the Qur’anic notion of *tawhîd* thereby extending it to its social and political applications in human life.

The notion of God is the center of every religion, and thus it is a central idea also of the Qur’ān. It is also this notion that the Qur’ān develops in the idea of *tawhîd*. It is so significant that almost one third of the whole Qur’ān is devoted to establish this notion in the hearts and minds of humanity. That is why it is also crucial for us to capture the essence of this notion as it is represented in the World Structure of Islamic worldview. For, if we understand what the Qur’ān means by the idea of God we shall not only understand one third of the Qur’ān’s message but also its significance in human life, scientific and philosophical thought. As we have tried to show in the previous chapter, every concept and idea in the worldview of an individual has an implication in his life and a conceptual basis for his behavior. The concept of *tawhîd* is so crucial for a scientist who is working within the Islamic scientific tradition that his activities are unified with the doctrinal understanding of this concept. Sometimes we forget the force behind concepts and belittle them as mental abstractions. I think that this is true in some sense especially if that concept has no bearing upon our behavior. The kinds of concepts we are talking about are not such abstract notions. That is why it may be wrong to call them just *concepts*. If I may remind again, knowledge is regarded as a living organism in this approach. Obviously the building blocks of our knowledge would be like *cells* of that living organism. In that case we cannot express Qur’ān’s idea of God as “the concept of God”. The fundamental concepts in a dynamic worldview as the one in the minds of early Muslim community at the time of the Prophet are like living cells that give life to every action performed by the individual. In this sense the concept of God in Islamic worldview would mean “God consciousness with presence (*hudûr*)”. In order to understand exactly what we represent in the Islamic worldview we need to cite instances where this conception comes to life at that time. With this idea the person becomes one with the concept. God is thus

perceived with the whole consciousness as the ultimate Reality; therefore, to know God is to know the Reality as if there is none but One God. In order to achieve this level of faith the human soul must attempt to lose its self-consciousness in Him. This is of course the ultimate level that is achieved by the Prophet, in Fazlur Rahman’s description as a “God-intoxicated” person.³ Although the following is a Sufi story it is an example of the ultimate level that a morally sensitive individual aspired for:

Sahl ibn ‘Abdallah bade one of his disciples endeavour to say “Allah! Allah!” the whole day without intermission. When he had acquired the habit of doing so, Sahl instructed him to repeat the same words during the night until they came forth from his lips even while he was asleep. “Now”, he said “be silent and occupy yourself with recollecting them”. At last the disciple’s whole being was absorbed by the thought of Allah. One day a log fell on his head and the words “Allah, Allah” were seen written in the blood that trickled from the wound.⁴

If we now go back to the Qur’ān to see how it projects God for a worldview we shall see that God is described as the sole creator of the universe and its sustainer. God is also described with attributes without the claim that He has attributes, around which a good deal of philosophical speculations is conjectured. The Qur’ān never enters such issues. But it gives examples to bring God to human comprehension. In this respect the most important issue is undoubtedly the existence of God as one of the most complicated and comprehensive as well as controversial problems in the history of human thought. Before we begin to understand the Qur’ān’s arguments we must, first of all, study its attitude towards this issue which will give us in fact the adequate insight to capture the essence of these arguments. It is interesting in this regard that the Qur’ān never uses the word “exist” to express God’s existence. It rather says that He is the Truth, *al-Haqq*. This does not mean that no discursive argument can be given for transcendent truth. We can indeed give such arguments but these arguments do not have the same force as a scientific proof which has a mathematical exactitude. Therefore, discursive arguments for God’s existence leave room for human freedom to either accept its conclusion or not to accept it. This is Qur’ān’s projection to the worldview of the faithful that humans are on *trial* “to see who will strive for the Truth and do good deeds” (67/al-Mulk, 2).

Second, although God’s existence cannot be proved objectively, i.e., with discursive argument up to the point of mathematical exactitude whereby it would annul human freedom to make a choice on this issue, it does not nevertheless mean that it cannot be proved subjectively to the point of certitude, *yaqīn*, which is the Qur’anic term to express exactitude. Subjective proof is, in fact, not a proof; hence, it does not annul human freedom. The method of the Qur’ān concerning the transcendent truth is rather to guide. Guidance is to show the reference to lead to the referent. Thus declares the Qur’ān: “We shall show them our signs in the horizon and in themselves until it is clear to them that it is the Truth” (41/Fussilat, 53). In this way Qur’ān’s treatment of God’s existence suggests three steps in order to reach God with certitude: The first and last steps are subjective, the second step is discursive. Both subjective steps consist in experiencing the Truth; actually in the first subjective step the Qur’ān invites man to withdraw from his prejudices and thus sharpen his inner perceptive faculties in order

³ *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 15.

⁴ Reynold A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), 46.

to receive the truth as the Qur’ān projects it: “Verily in this (Qur’ān) is a message for anyone who has a heart and understanding or who gives ear and earnestly witnesses (the Truth)” (50/Qâf, 37); “Who is humble before the Merciful without seeing and brings with him a heart turned in devotion to perceive the Truth.” (50/Qâf, 33)

Sometimes human mind may become so blind that it will not even consider the alternative view no matter how close this view may be to the truth. This is the “prejudiced mind” in its hardened state. The Qur’ān makes a definite reference to this state of human mind: “there is deafness in their ears and to them (the truth of) this (Qur’ān) is blindness; they are as though being called to the truth from a distant place” (41/Fussilat, 44); “their hearts are sealed; therefore, they do not understand” (9/al-Tawbah, 87). In a lengthy passage the Qur’ān powerfully depicts this human situation with vivid metaphors:

As to those who reject Faith [i.e., the Transcendent Truth] it is the same to them whether you warn them [i.e., explain them the Truth] or not, they will not believe [i.e., they will not even consider to understand the truth you are communicating]. (Therefore) God has sealed their hearts and hearing [i.e., their perceptive faculties]; and on their eyes is a veil... They would (try to) deceive God and the believers; but they deceive only themselves and yet they do not realize (this). In their hearts is a disease and God has increased their disease. There is a grievous penalty for them because they cry lies (even to themselves). When it is said to them: “Do not make corruption on the earth”, they say: “Why, we only want to establish order”, They are truly the ones who cause corruption, but they do not realize (this)... Their similitude is that of a man who kindled a fire, and when it lighted all around him. God took away their light and left them in utter darkness, unseeing, deaf, dumb and blind, they will not return (to the Truth). Or (another similitude) is that of a rain-laden cloud from the sky; in it are zones of darkness, and thunder and lightning. They press their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunder-clap, trembling from the fear of death. But God is ever encompassing the rejecters of Faith (i.e., Truth)... If God willed He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing. For God has power over all things. (2/al-Baqarah, 6-20)

It is the eternal divine decree that requires every individual to sharpen and develop his/her faculties by making effort from within him/her to learn these transcendent truths by guidance. This effort cannot be only a mental effort; it must also be a psychological (or emotive) effort. This is what we have briefly stated in the formulation of the Qur’anic outlook above concerning the “Covenant” and the “Trust”. It thus has a central role concerning the Human Structure of Islamic worldview. It is this aspect of the Qur’anic outlook that gave also dynamism to the morally sensitive people of that society. With a very careful and cautious step in order to remedy this disease of the psychological state of human personality the Qur’ān deeply analyzed the inner self of the individual so that his “heart” would become transparent to himself. In this analysis all evil feelings are laid bare before the person so that he can be attentive for the Truth, because it is those evil feelings and immoral practices that block his mind to understand and *passionately* appreciate the Truth;

Man is by nature unstable; when misfortune touches him he panics and when good things come his way, he prevents them from reaching others. (70/al-Ma‘ârij, 19- 21)

Human personality has been permeated with greed or selfishness (hence be attentive against this nature of your personality). (4/al-Nisâ’, 128)

He, who makes his personality pure, shall be successful, while he who corrupts it shall be in the loss. (91/al-Shams, 9-10)

The successful are those who can save themselves from their own selfish personality. (59/al-Hashr, 9)

Nay! But you love the immediate (i.e., the present life) and abandon the distant, i. e., the Hereafter. (75/al-Qiyâmah, 20)

It must now become clear that the idea of tawhîd leads to a sophisticated concept of human nature. The following verses may be cited here to give a summary of Qur’ân’s teachings on the notion of tawhîd:

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Say: (That) is God (who is) One. God is everlasting, who has not begotten, and has not been begotten. No one is equal to Him. (112/al-Ikhlâs; see also 6/al-An‘âm, 95-104; 67/al-Mulk, 3-4; 24/al-Nûr, 39; 2/al-Baqarah, 118; 52/al-Tûr, 29-49)

This approach as summarized here is very much noticeable in the Qur’ân especially in the verses revealed in the early phases of the process in emergence of Islamic worldview. The subjective approach gives moral strength which the early community needed in order to convert the people at different levels of morality between the decadent and the morally sensitive. Most of the transcendent Qur’anic concepts are presented in this way in the Qur’ân in order to transfer the existing worldview of the individuals to the moral approach of the Islamic worldview. We shall see the same approach in the concept of *nubuwwah*.

3.1.2 *Nubuwwah* (i.e., the concept of prophethood and revelation)

The second comprehensive concept of the World Structure in the Qur’anic outlook which led to the emergence of what may be called Islamic worldview in the mind of the individuals of early Islamic centuries is undoubtedly the notion of messengership which, in its broader outline, gives us Islam as an *archetypal religion*. We must point out that the notion of prophethood falls within the sphere of transcendent truth. Hence, it is also presented in Islamic worldview within the understanding of the objectivity and subjectivity problem.⁵ The notion of prophethood does offer an explanation for the reality, because it first assumes that not only the universe exists by the act of a Creator but also it exists for a purpose. In that case God’s existence is the foundation of prophethood. In fact, as we shall see in the discussion of resurrection, it is the foundation of all transcendent truth. The Qur’ân teaches God not only as the unique Creator, but also as the “purposeful” creator: “Those who remember God standing, sitting and lying down and reflect upon the creation of the heaven and the earth, and say: Our Lord! You have not created all this in vain” (38/ Sâd, 17); “We have not created the heaven and the earth and whatever is between them for mere entertainment.” (21/al-Anbiyâ’, 16); “Do you think that we have created you purposelessly and that you will not be returned to Us?” (23/al-Mu’minûn, 115); “Does man think that he will be left wandering (without a purpose).” (75/al-Qiyâmah, 36).

Why is this idea of creation for a certain purpose related to the Qur’anic idea of prophethood? I think the link is rational because the achievement of the *Divine Purpose* is possible if God sends His prophets as the instructors of this Divine Purpose. That is why they

⁵ For the details of this issue see *Islamic Scientific Tradition*, op. cit., 148 ff.

are described in the Qur’ân as “warners and givers of good tidings” (2/Al-Baqarah, 213; 4/al-Nisâ’, 165; 6/al-An’âm, 48; 18/al-Kahf, 56). In this mission prophets are given Books, which are sent to them through revelation: “Truly it is the revelation of the Lord of the universe. The trustworthy Spirit brought it down upon your heart that you may be one for the warners, in a clear Arabic language.” (26/al-Shu‘arâ’, 191-195)

Although prophethood is a transcendent truth, it is also entailed by the Qur’anic notion of *tawhîd*, it need not be examined with the same three steps in examining God’s existence. In fact all the transcendent truths represented in the World Structure of Islamic worldview as key concepts were simultaneously conveyed to the morally sensitive of the Meccan community and thus were presented to them within the mould of subjective approach with three steps discussed above.⁶ But its subjective character must always be kept in mind in order to capture its real meaning. Thus the Qur’ân declares: “Every nation has its messenger. When their messenger comes, the issue will justly be decided between them.” (10/Yûnus, 47); “(The Prophet Shu‘ayb said to his people): ‘O my people! I have delivered to you the message of my Lord and I have admonished you; how shall I waste my self on a disbelieving people?’” (7/al-A‘râf, 93); “(This is) the community of your forefather Abraham, who already named you Muslims before this. So let the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness over you in this regard and let you be the witnesses over mankind. Establish prayers, then, and pay *zakât* (i.e., welfare tax) and hold fast to God Who is your protector. What an excellent protector and what an excellent helper! (22/al-Hajj, 78).

Every messenger is thus described as a witness to his community. Their duty is to inform their community of God’s message and to instruct them in the Divine Message. Since the source of this Divine Message is one, all the Prophets teach essentially the same Truth. The only difference that could be found is in the sphere of Practical Truth because of the nature of this Reality. The essential identity of their messages is Transcendental Truth, which consists in the existence of God, the authenticity of Messengers and of the Divine Messages (i.e., Book) and resurrection (i.e., life after death). These three transcendent truths are so intimately interrelated that one cannot be without the other. Therefore, they form a unity upon which the religion is based: “The Apostle believes in what it has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the people of faith. Each one (of the Prophets) believes in God, His angels, His books, His Messengers and in resurrection.” 2/al-Baqarah, 285; also see 177; and 3/Âli ‘Imrân, 114; 4/al-Nisâ’, 136)

There is a chain of Messengers that began with the appearance of first man in human history. Since then every society and nation is endowed with a prophet:

We have revealed to you as We revealed to Noah, and the prophets after him,
and We revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, Jesus and job,
Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave to David Psalms. There are
messengers we have already told you of before, and messengers we have not told

⁶ Each step indeed contains more levels but in order to present the main point we have omitted the detailed discussion of the Qur’anic methodology. Let me just cite them here: 1. Subjective Step; the first level is *subjectively subjective* and the second level is *subjectively objective*; 1. Objective Step; the first level is *objectively objective* and the second level is *objectively subjective*; 3. Subjective Step: the first level is the Return and accordingly the second level would be “utter subjectivity”.

you of. God spoke directly unto Moses. There are also messengers bearing good tidings, and warning so that mankind might have no argument against God, after the messengers. God is All-mighty, All-wise. But God bears witness to what He sent down to you. He sent it down with his knowledge; and the angels also bear witness; and God suffices as a witness. (4/al-Nisâ’, 163-164)

It is He who has sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to proclaim it above all religion. God suffices as a witness. (48/al-Fath, 28)

The notion of prophethood includes also the existence of angels. Actually it presupposes the existence of God and angels on the one hand, and revelation on the other. Therefore, it is a comprehensive doctrine expressed under the umbrella concept *nubuwwah*. I shall now allude to some rational proofs which are discussed in the Qur’ân in relation to this doctrine. I have already made an attempt in the foregoing section to display the rationality⁷ of Muhammad’s (a.s.m.) messengership by distinguishing human psychology from the Qur’anic insight. In this context the following verse may give us sufficient rational proof for the fact that the Qur’ân was perceived by the morally sensitive of that society as the Revelation. “If you are in doubt about the revelation to Our servant (i.e., Muhammad), then produce a surah (i.e., chapter) like it. And call your friends or helpers (in order to prove your doubts). But if you cannot, and certainly you will not, then fear God’s punishment.” (2/al-Baqarah, 23)

In this argument the Qur’ân displays a deductive proof which can be formed into such an argument with premises and a conclusion:

First premiss: If a human cannot author the Qur’ân, then it is a revelation from God.

Second premiss: No human has ever authored even its like.

Conclusion: Therefore, the Qur’ân is a revelation from God.

Instead of giving the natural and logical conclusion of this deductive argument the Qur’ân rather gives the grievous consequence of not reaching to that conclusion and thus leaves it for man’s free choice either to infer the conclusion or not to infer it. This is because to accept and affirm the divine origin of a revelation does not come about by only rational argumentation; there is yet a need for deeper analysis of the inner reality of human nature with a subjective insight. It is possible to give more rational arguments to prove the divine nature of the Qur’ân, which, in turn, logically prove prophethood in general and the prophethood of Muhammad in particular. But excessive rational proof eliminates the subjective mood needed for all transcendent truth and thus becomes “unproof” leading thereby to either the denial of it or to agnosticism. It is, therefore, the subjective proof which is more significant than the rational proof. But subjective proofs should not be given, they should rather be found; and this lays the task on every individual to prove God, prophethood and resurrection for himself. This is also because the Qur’ân acknowledges that if you do not find God (and the rest of the transcendent truth) no one can prove them for you. It is the eternal decree of God that every person must find Him for himself. The duty of the Qur’ân, then in his endeavor is to guide man, and to show him the signs, *âyat* for these truths because

⁷ Rationality in this context is understood in a transcendental way, by which we mean rationality conceived experientially and as such understood by the intellect. For a somewhat detailed discussion of this see my “The Context of Ibn Rushd and Kant: A Critical Synthesis”, *Alif* 11 (1996).

man always needs guidance. In fact for the proof of these fundamental concepts the Qur’ān always uses this concept, which it has just introduced to the Islamic worldview, *āyah*, the sign.

Another view the Qur’ān holds with regard to prophethood is that the Prophet Muhammad is the last messenger in the series of Prophets. He is thus called the “seal” of prophets, and hence, there will be no more authentic prophets after him, and of course, as a result the Qur’ān is also acknowledged as the last revealed book. “Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Apostle of God, and the Seal of the Prophets; for God has the full knowledge of all things.” (33/al-Ahzâb, 40); “This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.” (5/al-Mâ’idah, 3)

This verse, upon which Muslim authorities agree to be the last verse revealed chronologically, finalizes also the conception of religion in Islamic worldview. The first revealed religion which began with the Prophet Adam has been perfected and reached completion with Islam, it was still Islam in its earliest phase and still it is Islam in its last and most perfect phase. There is thus a unity in God’s religion and all revealed religions are essentially thus the same.

3. 1.3 Hashr (i.e., resurrection or afterlife)

The third doctrinal construction of comprehensive edifice in the World Structure of Islamic worldview projected by the Qur’anic outlook is also a transcendent truth, because if there is God and if He sent Messengers to instruct people, then it is also logical that He must lay certain obligations on them. If there is an obligation then there must also be an “accounting” by which the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the obligation may be questioned. This idea of “accounting”, “questioning”, and in the end a “final Judgment” is the essence of resurrection. It is sufficiently clear that these three transcendent truths are the pieces of the same unity. One cannot be without the other. That is why we think that they are the doctrinal elements forming a perfect viewpoint within the World Structure. I shall illustrate this point discussing the Qur’anic proofs for resurrection at the same time. What we must keep in mind throughout this discussion is the subjective mood required to receive the truth of resurrection. I do not, therefore, claim that these proofs will demonstrate resurrection with a mathematical exactitude thereby yielding certitude. For this can come about only by the efforts of the individual. That is why the moral sentiment as the dynamic force behind these truths is essential to *see* the signs for them. The morally sensitive in the society at that time must have worked out these arguments within his own inner being. For, if one cannot prove resurrection for himself no one can prove it for him.

The *signs* given for resurrection require both God’s existence and prophethood. In fact we may say in the same way that for prophethood God’s existence is a pre-requisite. In general, then the Qur’ān’s argument develops in this manner:

1. God is the Truth.
2. Therefore, prophethood is reality.
3. And hence, resurrection must be Truth also.

I have pointed out earlier that since prophethood requires the existence of angels, then the issue is settled by the proof of messengership. In general, as it seems in the foregoing discussions as well, all the subsequent proofs depend on the first claim of the Qur’ân about the nature and existence of God. This can be observed more concretely in the following verses on resurrection: “So look at the works of God’s mercy; how He gives life to the earth after it was all dead. He is surely the life- giver of the dead, and He is powerful over every thing.” (30/al-Rûm, 50); “Has not man regarded how We created him of a sperm-drop? Then he is a manifest adversary and he has struck for Us a similitude and forgotten his creation, so that he asks: ‘Who can give life to the bones when they are decayed?’ You reply: ‘He who originated them the first time, shall bring them back to life, because He knows all creation.’” (36/Yâ Sîn, 79); “They have sworn by God the most earnest oaths that God will never raise up the dead, nay, it is a promise binding upon Him. But most people do not know . (When He gives life to the dead) He will make clear to them that they were in conflict among themselves and that the unbelievers were truly liars.” (16/al-Nahl, 38-39); “And We shall set up the just balances for the resurrection day, so that not one soul shall be wronged anything; even if it be the weight of a mustard seed. We shall produce it. And We are sufficient for reckoners.” (21/al-Anbiyâ’, 47). In all these verses the reference is to the decadent against whom the moral struggle is maintained with such words as “They have sworn by God the most earnest oaths that God will never raise up the dead” and “Has not man regarded how We created him of a sperm-drop? Then he is a manifest adversary and he has struck for Us a similitude and forgotten his creation”.

The last verse quoted above (21/al-Anbiyâ’, 47) brings a new dimension to the Islamic World Structure with an argument for resurrection. It says that since God gives life to everything on earth after they are all dead in winter (spring being their resurrection day), then He can also give life to mankind after they are dead. Consider this; is it not possible for a person to reproduce his work after it was destroyed? The first original production is logically more difficult and time consuming. But the second production is not the same; it is easier. This brings us to conclude that God is able to recreate after death. Now, in the Qur’ân He also promises “to re-create”. Moreover, His justice requires this re-creation, because in this world much just behavior pass unrewarded and many other evil deeds go by unpunished. Since there is not absolute justice in this world, then His justice will not let everything pass by unnoticed, and He will have another place where absolute justice will be achieved.

The discursive proofs given for God’s existence and for other transcendent truths reduce one of the most dynamic notions of Transcendent Truth to a mere abstraction, dull and static. The Qur’anic treatment of this subject is, thus, mostly subjective and dynamic in the sense that it requires every person to recognize himself/herself as a person who is responsible for his/her actions. This sense of responsibility also requires a final judgment which destines the individual to either an external happiness and bliss or a misery and regret: “When that great, overwhelming event comes, that day man shall remember what he had been striving for.” (79/al-Nâzi’ât, 34-35); “You have, indeed, come to Us (today) alone, as We had created you in the first place.” (6/al-An’âm, 94; also 19/Maryam, 95); “Nay! Indeed you love the present life, and leave aside the Hereafter. Some faces, that day will be bright (with joy), looking at their Lord; and some faces that day will be sad and darkened, realizing that some back-

breaking calamity is about to be inflicted on them... That day the return will be to your Lord.” (75/al-Qiyâmah, 20-30)

The day when this world will be transformed into the Day of Judgment marks the end of this world and every kind of existence shall be transformed into its “resurrected being”. The Qur’ân points to the great changes of that day with a vivid portrayal of those events, which when reflected upon with an attentive and unprejudiced mind sets the individual to a subjective receptivity of Truth:

When the sun shall be darkened and the stars fall; and when mountains move; and when she-camels with mature fetuses (the most precious possessions, and worldly glories) are abandoned, and when the wild beasts are herded together; and when the seas boil; infant-girl buried alive shall be asked for what crime she was killed; and when the deed-sheets are unrolled; and when the sky is unveiled; and when Hell is ignited, and the Garden (Paradise) is brought near-then every soul shall know what it had prepared (for this day). (71/Nûh, 1-14)

The agony of death shall come in Truth; (and then the individual will be said): “Is this what you were trying to avoid?” And when the Trumpet shall be blown that will be the threatened day. And every person shall come forth along with a driver and a witnessing (angel). (The evil one will be said): “You were (sunk) in heedlessness of this, but today We have removed your veil and your sight is keen”... Throw into Hell every ungrateful rebel, who withheld wealth (from the needy), a transgressor and a doubter (of the Truth)... And the Garden shall be brought near to those who had the fear of responsibility. (They will be said): This is what you had been promised- it is for every penitent who was heedful-he who was humble before the Merciful in the Unseen and came with a sincere heart (i.e., the one who was subjectively attentive to the Truth and made himself to experience it). Enter the Garden (i.e., Paradise) in Peace. This is a day of Eternal Life!. (50/Qâf, 19-34)

These passages cannot be taken as threats to psychologically force the individual to accept the Transcendent Truth, because the nature of this Truth is such that it evades any sort of constraint, hence the individual is always in possession of his freedom. These must rather be taken as *âyât*, signs for the subjective mood which can be communicated most effectively only through a lively descriptive manner. This also tells us that the language of the subjective mood is different than the language of deductive proof because every human being is created such a way that he has a receptive faculty for transcendent truth; and that faculties buried under his preoccupations in his daily-life. It is only through this all-embracing shaking and inside-out turn about that that faculty can be set to work and begin to receive the message of the Truth. Only then these descriptions become proofs for the individual who is thus not in a state of shock or of trembling but rather in a state of receptive attendance to Truth and of assuming the full responsibilities of his existence.

Considering only the World Structure we have given a very broad outline of Islamic worldview. However, in order to present a fuller version we shall now try to complement this broad statement with more ideas and living concepts from the other structures, among which Knowledge Structure stands out.

4. Knowledge Structure from the Qur’anic Outlook

In a worldview the Knowledge Structure functions as a foundation of all knowledge activities. As we have tried to demonstrate in our epistemology of science this structure exhibits an edifice of concepts all of which are clustered around the umbrella concept “knowledge”. Again we need to point out that in a dynamic worldview concepts are not mere abstractions, they are rather like living cells of a body of knowledge. That is why they are able to move the person in whose system of knowledge it dwells to action required by their dynamic meaning. This is the case with the early meaning of this concept within the Islamic worldview. Let us consider the second caliph after the Prophet, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab. Before he accepted Islam he was in the same community with the Prophet. He must have had in his mind a worldview and a concept of knowledge. But he never thought of searching after knowledge as he did after he accepted Islam. What made him so dynamic not only morally but also intellectually? It is the dynamic living concepts of Islamic worldview inculcated into their mind through the prophetic education that propelled them into action. As once he told them “The best moral struggle (*jihad*) is (by) the one who strives against his own self for Allah, The Mighty and Majestic.” This way moral struggle itself was defined with a dynamic concept of *jihad* which meant the intimate struggle to purify one’s soul of all evil, immoral influences and carnal desires.

I think that the doctrinal understanding of *jihad* is so much enriched that it cannot simply be translated as “moral struggle”. As we may see, in another Prophetic saying (*hadīth*) when he was asked: “What kind of *jihad* is better?” He replied, “A word of truth in front of an oppressive ruler.”⁸ Another man asked the Messenger of Allah: “Should I join the *jihad*?” He asked, “Do you have parents?” The man replied, “Yes.” The Prophet said, “Then strive by serving them.”⁹ This perspective is imparted to the morally sensitive by the Qur’ān: “As for those who *strive* (*jāhadu*) in Us (the cause of Allah), We surely guide them to Our paths, and lo! Allah is with the good doers.” (29/al-‘Ankabût, 69); “The (true) believers are only those who believe in Allah and his messenger and afterward doubt not, but *strive* with their wealth and their selves for the cause of Allah. Such are the truthful.” (49/al-Hujurât, 15)

On the basis of these dynamic concepts the epistemology of science developed here actually claims that sciences cannot develop by being *imported* from another civilization. In other words, no science can arise in a society by importing scientific knowledge from another civilizational source. This is because sciences emerge from within, and the only way for this to be realized is through establishing a well developed doctrinal concept of knowledge in the worldviews of individuals of the society which will then act with its Knowledge Structure as the adequate *environmental context* for sciences. Our purpose now is to demonstrate that the early Islamic worldview as it emerged through the Revelation with Prophetic instructions outlined above was already analyzable into its Knowledge Structure as well as Value Structure and Human Structure. But in this context we are not much concerned with the latter

⁸ *Sunan al-Nasa’i*, No. 4209.

⁹ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, No. 5972.

two structures; therefore, we shall try to fully analyze the Knowledge Structure in order to show how it acted as the environmental context of scientific knowledge in Islam.

First of all, the concept of knowledge in general (*‘ilm*) is introduced as a fundamental element within the worldview of Islam. At the beginning the morally sensitive understood from this just information they possessed about everything. Of course as an everyday word *‘ilm* is used both in the Qur’ân and certain *ahâdîth* also to mean knowledge in general: “We have given them a book (i. e., Revelation) and explained it with knowledge as a guidance and mercy for people who believe.” (7/al-A’râf, 52; also see 4/al-Nisâ’, 157; 6/al-An’âm, 119; 27/al-Naml, 15-6; 31/Luqmân, 20). The same can be said to the following saying of the Prophet: “If anyone acquires knowledge of things by which God’s own pleasure is sought, yet acquires it only to get some worldly advantage, he will not reach the smell of Paradise.”¹⁰ But later on the concept was evaluated so much in the newly emerging worldview that the significance attached to *‘ilm* began to cut it off from its everyday usage: “Amongst His servants, only the scholars (*‘ulamâ’*) are God-fearing.” (35/al-Fâtir, 28); “Are those who know, to be considered equal to those who do not know? Only prudent men reflect [on this].” (39/Al-Zumar, 9); “God will raise in rank those of you who believe and those who are given knowledge.” (58/al-Mujâdalah, 11). In all these verses the term “knowledge” (*‘ilm*) does not appear to be a technical term yet. But there is a dynamic emphasis to encourage the morally sensitive to search for learning. Many more verses in the Qur’ân can be given to this effect; it suffices to cite the fact that the Prophet was even asked to supplicate “O my Lord! Increase my knowledge” (20/*Tâ Hâ*, 114). The scholars are honored by being mentioned in rank next to the angels: “God is the witness that there is no deity except Himself, and so are the angels and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice.” (3/Âli ‘Imrân, 18)

The Prophet also was teaching them the importance of knowledge: “Among the signs of the Hour (*ashrât al-sâ‘ah*-Doomsday) are the decreasing of knowledge and the appearance of ignorance.”¹¹ He also declared that “God does not take away knowledge by wresting it from the people, but takes it away by the death of the scholars (*‘ulamâ’*) until no scholar is left. People begin to accept the ignorant as leaders. When they are asked, they furnish information without knowledge. They thus go astray and lead the people astray.”¹² This way he not only tried to teach them how precious knowledge was but also encouraged them to run after knowledge: “He who is asked about something that he knows but conceals it will have a bridle of fire put on him on the Day of Resurrection.”¹³ In the same vein he declared: “If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, God will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise, the angels will lower their wings from good pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, and the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and the fish in the depth of water will ask forgiveness for the scholar (*‘âlim*). The superiority of a scholar over a pious (*zâhid*) is like that of the moon on the night when it is full over the rest of the stars. The scholars are the

¹⁰ Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, “Bâb al-‘Ilm”, 3656.

¹¹ Al-Bukhârî, “Kitâb al-‘Ilm”, 71.

¹² Ibid, 86.

¹³ Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, “Bâb al-‘Ilm”, 3650. Translations of the Prophetic traditions (*ahâdîth*) from the *Sunan* of Abû Dâwûd are adopted from Ahmad Hasan’s translation *Sunan Abû Dâwûd* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1984).

heirs of the Prophets who leave neither money nor property behind, but only knowledge. He who takes it, takes an abundant portion.”¹⁴

It is important to see that those who seek knowledge are put in a position to represent Prophets. Moreover, the knowledge activity gets more stress than piety. We see the same statement in another Prophetic saying: “An intellectual (*faqîh*) is more vehement to the Satan than one thousand devout persons.” (*‘âbid*).¹⁵ He also stated that “if God wants to do good to a person, He makes him a scholar (*faqîh*) in religion.”¹⁶ These teachings of the Prophet are sufficient to show that the Knowledge Structure of the Islamic worldview begins with an immense emphasis on the concept of knowledge. Of course in this respect ‘*ilm* is not the only term included in this emphasis, although we have concentrated on it. It seems that in this connection, two terms go together in early Islam: ‘*ilm* and *fiqh*. Both terms refer to knowledge, although the former expresses exact, precise and definite knowledge, while the latter signifies “theoretical knowledge” which is a good candidate to refer to *scientific knowledge*, and hence knowledge of the rational kind. This can be ascertained in the Prophet’s prayer to Ibn ‘Abbâs in which he said: “O God, give him the [rational] understanding of religion and make him proficient in knowledge” (*Allahumma faqqihhu fî al-dîn wa ‘allimhu al-ta’wîl*).¹⁷ The term used in this saying to refer to the “understanding of religion” is *fiqh*; but the one that is used in relation to “interpretation” is a verb from the root of ‘*ilm* because we know that interpretation by personal theory (*ra’y*) is not allowed. That is why ‘*ilm* is used by both the Qur’ân and *hadîth* to refer to the revealed knowledge which is definite and absolute.¹⁸ Therefore, ‘*ilm* means knowledge which is either revealed or related to that which is revealed, but *fiqh* means knowledge reached by personal effort of understanding.

When ‘*ilm* is revealed it is absolute and thus is identical with the Revelation; but when it is attained by man, it cannot be identical with Revelation. Therefore, the general usage of ‘*ilm* by both the Qur’ân and the Prophet refer to the knowledge attained by man. The phrase *bi ghayri ‘ilm*-- without having any knowledge (6/al-An‘âm, 119; 31/Luqmân, 20, etc.), therefore, means “‘*ilm* devoid of revelational content when it should not be so devoid”. Hence, the general meaning of ‘*ilm* is intimately linked in the Knowledge Structure of the Islamic worldview with its usage in the sense of Revelation.

The ones who do wrong follow their own whims *without having any knowledge*. Who will guide someone whom God has let go astray? They will have no supporters. So keep your face set straight to the true religion, God’s natural handiwork along which He has patterned mankind. There is no way to alter God’s creation. That is the correct religion, though most men do not *know*. (30/al-Ra’d, 29-30)

It is clear that the moral dimension is what the Qur’ân is developing here as the Knowledge Structure of the Islamic worldview. If this moral dimension is divested of knowledge, it may lead to disastrous results: “Those who have stupidly killed their own

¹⁴ Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, “Bâb al-‘Ilm”, 3634; also in al-Tirmidhî, “‘Ilm”, 19; al-Nasa’î, *Tahârah*, 112; Ibn Mâjah, *Muqaddimah*, 17; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, IV, 239.

¹⁵ Ibn Mâjah, “Muqaddimah”, 222.

¹⁶ Al-Bukhârî, “Kitâb al-‘Ilm”, chapter 14.

¹⁷ Isma‘îl ibn Muhammad al-‘Ajlûnî. *Kashf al-Khafa’ wa Muzîl al-Ilbas* (Beyrut: Mu’assasat al-Risalah, 1985), 1: 220-1.

¹⁸ For this usage, see the following verses: 2/al-Baqarah, 120; 3/Âli ‘Imrân, 61; 6/al-An‘âm, 119, 140, 143; 11/Hûd, 14, 49; 13/al-Ra’d, 37, 43; 19/Maryam, 43.

children *without having any knowledge* and forbidden something God has provided them with, have lost out through inventing things about God; they have gone astray and not been guided...Who can be more harmful than the one who invents a lie about God to mislead people *without having any knowledge*.” (6/al-An‘âm, 140, 144)

Therefore, the concept of knowledge is qualified with a moral dimension which is provided again by the Revelation; the attitude of indifference is thereby excluded from the Islamic worldview and its Knowledge Structure. Hence, knowledge is not conceived to be neutral to values, it is inherently linked with values; and thus it can be harmful or useful --as the Prophet prayed: “O God, I seek refuge with You from the knowledge which is not useful.”¹⁹ The Qur’ân thus declared: “They learn what is harmful and not useful to them.” (2/al-Baqarah, 102)

The useful knowledge in the Knowledge Structure of Islamic worldview is understood as either Revelation itself or as knowledge derived directly from Revelation, or as knowledge in the general sense, namely as acquired by man, but which can be reconciled with Revelation and thus be based upon it, as we have seen in the verses quoted. That is why the term *‘ilm* in Islamic worldview is used in the sense of Revelation or in the general meaning of revealed knowledge. In the Qur’ân whenever it is used in this sense it is almost exclusively used with the definite article (*al-‘ilm*). Therefore, the Qur’ân definitely wishes to qualify knowledge; in fact, its aim is to guide knowledge in general; that is why revelational knowledge is collated with it at this point. Knowledge in general is no longer left aloof, but it is suggested to be invested with revelational values. Once general knowledge is thus invested, it becomes *illuminated knowledge*, which is no longer knowledge that is not useful. There is no doubt that all these values are delicately infused into the knowledge-conception of the Islamic worldview by the Qur’ân. Thus a new mentality emerged with regard to knowledge as represented in the Knowledge Structure. This mentality brought the approach that “the true knowledge is with God alone” (46/al-Ahkâf, 23). It also acknowledged levels (*marâtib*) in knowledge based on the verse: “above all those who possess knowledge is an All-knowing” (12/Yûsuf, 76). Moreover, it categorically declares that “God knows you do not know.” (2/al-Baqarah, 216; see also 3/Âli ‘Imrân, 65-6)

In this way a morality of knowledge is also developed as a part of the Knowledge Structure of the Islamic worldview. Knowledge unqualified is considered as though it is not knowledge at all; hence, the phrase “without having any knowledge”. For when the Qur’ân accuses those people with this allegation, it cannot obviously mean that those people had no knowledge at all; in fact, “they knew only the external look of the worldly life, but they were totally unaware of the life to come (*al-âkhirah*)” (30/al-Rûm, 7). That is why their knowledge is as if *non-existent*. Therefore, *unilluminated* knowledge is superficial in itself and as such it can be equated with ignorance. As all these conceptions concerning *‘ilm*, *fiqh* and other knowledge-related terms were developed, a doctrinal understanding gradually began to emerge within the Islamic worldview; it is this comprehensive doctrinal understanding that we call the ‘Knowledge Structure’ of the Islamic worldview. As we have seen, this conception emphasizes knowledge with an utmost care, without even leaving it with a mere

¹⁹ Muslim, “Kitâb al-Dhikr”, 73; Abû Dâwûd, “Witr”, 32, and so on.

emphasis, for it also states that “seeking knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim.”²⁰ Moreover, besides this emphasis, a framework is also given together with the doctrinal understanding of knowledge. Considering also the Qur’anic encouragement to examine and understand the universe and the nature of certain related problems, it becomes inevitable that as a result of all these comprehensive knowledge-seeking activities, a network of concepts emerges. Let us try to examine this doctrinal structure closely.

As a doctrinal concept *’ilm* is developed into a uniform understanding of knowledge that forms its own ontological conception in the Qur’ân. We must elaborate this conception so that we can see the early epistemology that was yielded in the minds of the morally sensitive individuals within the community. In order to bring knowledge to its proper domain it is possible to ascertain two worlds (*’âlam*, in the dual form *’âlamayn*, pl. *’âlamîn*) from the Qur’anic approach: The first is the “Unseen world”, to use the Qur’anic term itself, *’âlam al-ghayb*, and the other is the “Visible World”, or to express it with the Qur’anic term *’âlam al-shahâdah*. This distinction is maintained in the Qur’ân within the oft-repeated verse *’âlim al-ghayb wa’l-shahâdah* (Knower of the Unseen and the Visible; 39/Zumar, 46; 23/Mu’minûn, 92; 6/An’âm, 63; 59/Hashr, 22; 9/Tawbah, 105; etc). This phrase refers to God’s knowledge of everything in all the possible realms of knowledge, as we shall see. This distinction is made in order to express the fact that there is certain kind of knowledge which is with God (*’indallâh*) and humans cannot acquire that knowledge through the faculties with which they are endowed: “Say (O Muhammad): ‘I do not tell you that I possess the treasures of God, nor do I know the *ghayb* ... I only follow what is revealed.’” (6/An’âm, 50); “Or that the *ghayb* is in their hands, so that they can write it down?” (68/Qalam, 47); “To God belongs the *ghayb* of the heavens and the earth.” (16/Nahl, 77); “God alone has the keys of the *ghayb*; none but He knows them.” (6/An’âm, 59).

The Qur’ân thus makes it clear that humans cannot know the Unseen World, namely the *ghayb*. It is clear that the Qur’ân projects *ghayb* as an ontological world, and whether its knowledge is possible for us. For it is clear that although the *ghayb* cannot be known by man, it is never implied in the Qur’ân that humans cannot know the Visible World, i.e., the *shahâdah*. On the contrary, man is encouraged to inquire and reflect upon the Visible Universe, which is evident from the following verses:

In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day there are indeed signs for men of understanding. (3/Âl-i ‘Imrân, 190)

There is no lack of proportion in the creation of God. So turn your eyes (and look around). Do you see any defect? Again, turn your sight (and examine) a second time. But your eyes will come back to you dull and frustrated in a state worn out. (67/Mulk, 3-4)

And who other than God created the heavens and the earth and sent down for you water from the sky, whereby we cause to grow lush orchards. For it is not up to you to cause their trees to grow! Is there, then, a god beside God? ... (27/Naml, 60-64)

These verses make it clear that the Visible World can be known by man through reflective thinking. It is clear, however, that the study of this world falls under the experimental areas of learning and as such it is the subject matter of natural sciences. But

²⁰ Ibn Mâjah, “Muqaddimah”, 17, 224.

since *ghayb* cannot be known by man in the same manner, it cannot thus be the subject matter of natural or experimental sciences. In that case, how can we acquire the knowledge of the Unseen? The Qur’ân seems to offer itself as *the guide* to the Unseen and thus tries to make it *comprehensible* or *intelligible* to humans. It first argues that “God alone knows the *ghayb*, and He does not disclose it to anyone except a messenger whom He has chosen.” (72/Jinn, 26-27). Then tells us what kind of knowledge is revealed to the Prophets: “these are the tidings of the *ghayb* which We have revealed unto you. Before this, neither you²¹ nor your people knew them.” (11/Hûd, 49)

None except God knows the *ghayb* in the heavens and on earth; nor can they perceive when they shall be resurrected. Still less can their knowledge comprehend the Hereafter. (27/Naml, 65-66)

This is the Book, wherein is no doubt, a guidance to those who fear God, and believe in the *ghayb*. (2/Baqarah, 2-3)

As to those who know their Lord from the *ghayb*, there awaits them forgiveness and a great reward. (2/Baqarah, 97; etc.)

On the basis of these verses it is possible to infer that the *ghayb* includes God, the Hereafter, Revelation and similar concepts that fall within the domain of faith (*îmân*). Why does the Qur’ân declare that the *ghayb* cannot be known except through Revelation? The answer to this question is the Qur’anic epistemology which requires a rigorous analysis of many related verses to decipher. But it is this epistemology that was present within the Knowledge Structure of Islamic worldview. We shall try to outline this epistemology as the dynamic doctrinal concept of *‘ilm* represented by the Qur’ân.

The *ghayb* cannot be known by the unaided reason, because it has no effect upon our sense organs. But we know the Visible World directly, thanks to the fact that it affects our sense organs upon which the mind adds its capacity of knowing to produce knowledge about the Visible Universe, namely, *‘âlam al-shahâdah*. Therefore, we may assume that, according to the Qur’ân, no human knowledge is possible unless there is some sort of experience preceding the cognitive operation of the mind. This is definitely true in so far as the knowledge of the Visible World is concerned. But I think that the Qur’ân’s statement is general and, therefore, the same inference is also true so far as the knowledge of the *ghayb* is concerned. In that case, we need logically to ask how experience of the *ghayb* is produced before the cognitive operation of the mind to yield the knowledge of this world. When we examine the verses that bear upon this problem, we find that according to the Qur’ân human beings have certain internal faculties by which they can receive the effects of the Unseen World; in other words, every person can experience the *ghayb* provided that he or she pays sincere attention to the guidance of the revelation. For the experiencing of the Unseen may not be direct and hence not immediate. We, therefore, need mediation to the experience of the *ghayb* and the Qur’ân offers itself as mediation. In order to mediate however there should be a “center” so to speak which will function in a similar way as faculty of experience. The center of this experience can be called the “inner perceptive faculty” which the Qur’ân clearly refers to as “heart” i.e., *qalb*.²²

²¹ The pronoun “you” refers to Prophet Muhammad (a.s.m.).

²² See, for instance, 26/Shu’arâ, 88-89; 50/Qaf, 37; 7/A’raf, 179; 13/Ra’d, 28; 22/Hajj, 46.

In fact the Qur’anic doctrine of *ghayb* juxtaposes the terms “heart” and “intellect” in a verse (22/Hajj, 46) as *qulûbun ya'qiluna bihâ* (hearts to think with). Obviously humans do not think with their “hearts”, whereas it is represented here as a faculty of reflective thinking which is called “intellect” or “mind” in philosophy and its branch epistemology. Why, then, does the Qur’ân represent heart as a faculty of reflective thinking? If we examine the following verses we may find the answer for our question. Already in one of the verses quoted above (50/Qâf, 37) heart is implied as the center of experience while the revelation projects the Unseen Truth, namely the Truth of the *ghayb*; we can interpret *qalb* in this verse as a faculty of experience, because it is compared with ear, which is again a faculty of sense-experience. In fact we see that in several more verses heart is likened to the faculties of experience:

Have you seen the one who has taken his own vain desire as his god?
Knowing that, Allah left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and
put a cover on his sight. Now who will guide him after Allah (has withdrawn his
guidance)? (45/al-Jâthiyah, 23)

Is it not a guidance to those who inherit the earth after those who inhabited it
that if We willed We could punish them because of their sins, and seal their
hearts so that they could no longer hear? (7/al-A'râf, 100, also 101; and 2/al-
Baqarah, 7; 24/al-Nûr, 37; 16/al-Nahl/, 108; 17/al-Isrâ', 46; 18/al-Kahf, 57)

Particularly this last verse (7/A'râf, 100) represents heart as a “faculty to hear with”; for it is not the physical faculty of hearing that can hear and thus experience the Truth about *ghayb*. From this we can conclude that for the Qur’ân as the center of inner experience, heart with all its lower faculties, is the only faculty that can be subject to receive representations from the World Unseen, i.e., *ghayb*. Therefore, it cannot be a faculty of thinking, but rather a center receiving from its lower and higher faculties, such as conscience, desire, guilt, fear, etc., the affections of the Unseen World upon them. In that case, *qulûbun ya'qiluna bihâ* and similar expressions such as *qulûbun la-yafqahuna bihâ* (7/A'râf, 179) may be rendered as; “hearts that furnish representations from the Unseen World (*ghayb*) for the mind to reflect upon”.

It is clear that the Qur’ân singles out two realms of knowledge for humans to inquire into; one is this Visible World (*shahâdah*), and the other is the Unseen World (*ghayb*). The former is experienced with sense organs, or external faculties, while the latter is experienced by the heart, or internal faculties. The experience of both worlds is then handed down to the faculty of reflective thinking which in turn produces knowledge on the basis of these representations. It must be pointed out, however, that the representation of the Visible World in faculties of sense-experience is direct and immediate, while the representation of the Unseen World by faculties of inner perception, namely heart, is not direct; but rather through guidance, which is represented by the Revelation. On the other hand, since this mediation is possible only through some reflection, then there is a reciprocal relationship between the heart and the mind. This means that for receiving the experience of the *ghayb* some reflection upon revelation is needed. This reflective approach we have tried to develop above as the “subjective approach”. Therefore, the Qur’ân encourages man to inquire into and reflect upon the Visible World in order to acquire its knowledge. But in so far as the Unseen World is concerned, it wishes to guide man towards its knowledge. For *ghayb* is the realm that

transcends our sense-experience; and hence, its direct intuition or experience is not possible. In this subjective approach, as we have seen, guidance of the Qur’ān consists in the fact that it establishes a finely balanced relationship, which is reciprocal, between the heart and the mind. In order to clarify what is meant by “finely balanced, or harmonious, relationship” between heart and the intellect, we need to elucidate a philosophical concept which is relevant in this context; “metaphysical realm”.

Metaphysic as a branch of philosophy investigates issues such as God’s existence, immortality, the nature of soul and revelation in addition to such abstract problems as the nature of being, freedom and truth (*al-haqq*). All these issues and a score of others need an ontological status in order to represent them in metaphysics as real. We cannot assign them a concrete world of their own; as a result, we may conveniently refer to their universe as the “metaphysical or *transcendent* realm” because their actual reality evades or transcends our sense experience which is the most common type of experience humans have. Moreover, even some ethical problems are also a part of the transcendent realm. Therefore, human knowledge system needs the guidance of revelation in acquiring the knowledge of the issues relating to the transcendent realm. For, it is possible to verify its findings through what I shall term ‘experiential means’ which underlies the subjective mood. Since we have interpreted the Qur’anic term heart as the inner faculty of experience that receives representations through the guidance of revelation from the Unseen Realm, namely *ghayb*, all representations thus received can be brought under the “experiential”. We may also in line with this definition entitle all areas of learning that fall under this realm, “experiential subjects”, as opposed to the directly “experimental”. Experiential inquiries belong directly to the inquirer, though they are not perceived directly because our inner faculty of representation needs an awakening by and the mediation of Revelation. Just as our faculty of outer experience sometimes needs the mediation of a device to see or hear things afar, though they are perceivable directly; in the same manner the inner faculty needs a finer and more subtle mediation. Again this mediation is presented in the Qur’ān as guidance, namely, *hidâyah*, which is reflected in the mental state of the inquirer, defined as “subjective mood”.

Although we have explained above what is meant by the subjective mood represented in the human state of mind because of its crucial function in our knowledge system I would like to briefly explain it in this context in relation to the Qur’anic epistemology. In the subjective mood, as a mental state, what revelation wants to manifest is harmoniously coalesced with the faculty of reflective thinking, and the faculty of inner perception, namely the heart. In order to achieve this, the Qur’ān refers to subjective states that are intimately connected with the heart. In these states and moods, the whole existence of the person is brought into his sight; crucial questions are asked about life and death; certain violent and terrifying phenomena are vividly described, as we have seen above in relation to the dynamic concept of resurrection and apocalyptic discussions. In all these, the aim of the Qur’ān is, in the first place, to help the subject clear his/her own mental states from any prejudice or pre-conceptions about the subject of inquiry. Secondly, by doing this the Qur’ān establishes a certain relationship between the inquirer and the subject of discourse. This relationship liberates the inquirer from a dangerous attitude that is the feeling of indifference to the subject of inquiry. This way the inquirer as the student of revelation becomes sincere and willing to understand and receive the

message projected. Thirdly, by analyzing the subjective states of the inquirer, the Qur'ân also invites him to analyze his being and consciousness. This self-analysis, or self-meditation prepares the inquirer for the message of revelation. Sometimes in order to achieve this, the Qur'ân makes use of moral concepts and ethical consciousness that is so deeply engraved in man's whole being (*fitrah*). I shall cite the following verses in order to illustrate how the Qur'ân so carefully and masterfully executes its operation with regard to the subjective mood.

Verily we created man from a drop of mingled sperm in order to test him. So we gave him hearing and seeing. We showed him the (right) way whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will). We have surely prepared for the unbelievers chains, fetters and a blazing fire. As to the (morally) virtuous, they shall drink of a cup whose mixture is camphor, a fountain where God's servants drink making it to gush forth abundantly. They fulfill their promises and fear a Day whose evil is far-reaching. And they feed the poor, the orphan and the captive for only the love of God. (76/Insân, 2-8)

So he gave nothing in charity, nor did he pray! But on the contrary, he rejected the Truth and turned away. Then he returned to his family with arrogance. Woe to you (o man)! Woe to you!. Does man think that he will be left uncontrolled (without purpose)? Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (in lowly form)? Then he became a leech-like clot. Then God made and fashioned him in due proportion. And of him He made two sexes, male and female. Does He not then have the power to give life to the dead? (75/Qiyâmah, 31-40)

As to those who reject Faith (i.e., the Transcendent Truth) it is the same to them whether you warn them (i.e., explain them the Truth) or not, they will not believe (i.e., they will not even consider to understand the Truth you are communicating). (Therefore) God has sealed their hearts and hearing (i.e., their perceptive faculties); and on their eyes is a veil... They would (try to) deceive God and the believers; but they deceive only themselves and yet do not realize (this). In their hearts is a disease and God has increased their disease. There is a grievous penalty for them because they cry lies (even to themselves). When it is said to them: "Do not make corruption on the earth", they say: "Why, we only want to establish order". They are truly the ones who cause corruption, but they do not realize (this).. Their similitude is that of a man who kindled a fire, and when it lighted all around him, God took away their light and left them in utter darkness, unseeing, deaf, dumb and blind; they will not return (to the Truth). Or (another similitude) is that of a rain-laden cloud from the sky; in it are zones of darkness, and thunder and lightning. They press their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunderclap, trembling from the fear of death. But God is ever encompassing the rejecters of Faith (i.e., Truth)! If God willed He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing. For God has power over all things. (2/Baqarah, 6-20)

Man is by nature unstable; when misfortune touches him he panics and when good things come his way, he prevents them from reaching others. (70/Ma'ârij, 19-21; see also the verses quoted above such as 4/Nisâ, 128; 83/Mutaffifin, 1-6; 91/Shams, 9-10; 96/'Alaq, 1-8)

It is important for the Qur'anic epistemology not to separate both realms of knowledge and hold them in duality because the Visible Realm points to the Transcendent Realm. For, the Qur'anic term *ayah* becomes intelligible in terms of the Visible Realm, which means the Great Sign of the transcendent perceived experientially. The knowledge thus reached is *ma'rifah* expressing the experiential conception of reality beyond. One of the most significant terms of Islamic scientific tradition as found in the Islamic worldview is *ma'rifatullah* means

the human knowledge reached experientially through the guidance of Revelation. For this reason a logical connection of the word ‘ilm with Allah, namely *ilmullah* means only God’s Absolute Knowledge. Our knowledge of God is thus called *ma’rifatullah*. The knowledge of this kind as represented later in Islamic thought is ‘*irfân*. All of these terms together with the concept of *fiqh* from the part of the dynamic doctrinal concept of ‘ilm in the Knowledge Structure of Islamic worldview. If we would like to convey another related concept into the picture of Islamic knowledge tradition we have to mention the term *hikmah*, i.e., wisdom. We may add in this regard that just as both realms are delicately conjoined in Qur’anic epistemology, their corresponding faculties in man are also conjoined in the same manner. Therefore, the heart and the mind must be united in that subtle way. When they both are thus united the knowledge of both the Transcendent and the Visible Realms, yield a unity constituting Islamic worldview, which can be expressed by the Qur’anic term “*hikmah*”. When they both are separated consequential results are yielded not only in the knowledge of the Visible Realm, but also in the knowledge of the Transcendent Realm. When the unity (*tawhid*) in both realms and in their corresponding faculties of knowledge in man is established so harmoniously and delicately, the result is called by the Qur’ân “*sirat mustaqim*”, namely the Straight Path.

These concepts together with the understanding of the dynamic concept ‘ilm and other related concepts such as *fiqh*, *ra’y*, *ma’rifah*, *kalām* and *hikmah* they yield in the mind of the morally sensitive individuals gradually led to the emergence of a knowledge tradition, which in turn set the scientific process in motion. Through this process first emerged what we identified as the “General Scientific Conceptual Scheme”. Since this scheme emerged as a result of and within the Islamic worldview, we identify it as the *Islamic scientific conceptual scheme*. As we have shown, if such a scheme emerges within a given society or civilization, it is called ‘scientific tradition’. Therefore, the Islamic scientific conceptual scheme is the ground of the Islamic scientific tradition built in the Knowledge Structure of Islamic worldview. As we shall discuss this process in the subsequent chapters in this context we shall try to relate the Knowledge Structure of Islamic worldview to the other structures in order to show first how a knowledge tradition emerged as a result of these moral and enlightened efforts.

5. The Value and Human Structures in the Islamic Worldview

The Value Structure of Islamic worldview includes mainly the moral responsibilities of individuals which are expressed in this structure under two broad headings: The first category is our responsibilities towards the Creator, all which are collected under the concept of *Ibâdah*, which means in a restricted sense “worship”. But this translation reduces the concept to a very narrow framework. For, it refers to all our obligations concerning God’s commands and prohibitions, which is represented as servitude to Him. In this structure the highest human moral value is reflected in this concept as the Qur’ân categorically declares: “I have not created the Jinns and humans except for servitude of Me” (51/al-Dhâriyât, 56). The second category is our responsibility towards God’s creatures, all duties under this category is sheltered under the umbrella concept “justice” *‘adâlah*. Both of these categories gradually formed into a subject of study and defined as a discipline known today as “fiqh” (Islamic Jurisprudence).

First of all, we cannot go into the details of this topic but briefly we can say that in Islamic worldview certain religious obligations (*fard*) as *'ibadah* are represented among the duties towards God are fundamentally four:

1. Daily worship (*salâh*): "Perform the worship (*salâh*) at the sunset to the dark of night, and the recital of dawn." (17/al-Isrâ', 78)
2. Fasting (*sawm*): "O believers, the fast is prescribed for you as it was for those that were before you... The month of Ramadan, in which the Qur'ân was revealed to be guidance for the people, and as clear proofs of the guidance and salvation. So those of you who are present at that month, fast it." (2/al-Baqarah, 178-180)
3. Welfare tax (*zakât*): "And be steadfast in worship give welfare tax (*zakât*)." (2/al-Baqarah, 43, 110)
4. Pilgrimage (*hajj*): "And proclaim the pilgrimage among people. They shall come to you on foot and on every kind of saddle beast." (22/al-Hajj, 27); "Fulfill the pilgrimage and the visitation (*'umrah*) unto God. But if you are prevented (from completing it) then offer a sacrifice?" (2/al-Baqarah, 196)

Secondly, the Qur'ân also prescribed certain religious prohibitions (*harâm*) as part of the Value Structure. It banned, for example, usury, fornication, consumption of alcohol and pork, gambling, murdering and so on. "God has permitted bartering and prohibited usury... God will deprive usury of all blessing, but increase the deeds of charity... O believers! Fear God and give up the usury that is outstanding, if you are believers... If the debtor is in a difficulty give him time until it is easier for him to repay. But if you give it in charity that is better for you, if only you knew." (2/al-Baqarah, 275-280); "Whosoever slays a person, other than for murder or for spreading corruption in the land, shall be as if he slew mankind altogether. And whosoever saves a life shall be as if he saved the life of all mankind." (5/al-Mâ'idah, 35); "O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible), for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And do not spy on each other; nor speak ill of each other behind their backs." (49/al-Hujurât, 12); "Say: Come, I will recite you what your Lord has forbidden you; that you should not associate anything with him, and be good to your parents. Do not slay your children because of poverty; We provide sustenance for you and for them. Stay away from shameful deeds, whether open or secret and do not kill anyone except by way of justice. You are thus commanded. Hopefully, you will reflect." (6/al-An'âm, 151); "O believers! Wine and gambling are an abomination and Satan's work. So avoid them that you may prosper. Satan only desires enmity and hatred between you in regard to wine and gambling, and to hinder you from the remembrance of God, and from prayer." (5/al-Mâ'idah, 90-91)

As we have argued above since there is no distinction in Islamic worldview between ethical, moral and religious responsibilities all of these issues are discussed under one discipline, Islamic law. Hence, it must have become clear that the ethical and legal principles are thus supported with the religious consciousness. Therefore, all these prohibitions have religious foundations. Hence, their performance yields impiety and punishment in the hereafter. But abstaining from them makes the believer pious and hence deserves reward in the hereafter. On the basis of these principles Muslim jurists developed a legal system. Although one is punished if he neglects these duties the ideal moral life for a believer is set as God's satisfaction. A morally sensitive pays particular attention not to do these

responsibilities even in return to Paradise. Later in Islamic civilization the Sufi thinkers emphasized love as the sole guide of the soul in its ascent to God. Ibn al-‘Arabî, for example, declares that no religion is more sublime than a religion of love and longing for God. Love is the essence of all creeds.”²³ Since the mystic believes in the unity of Reality, he sees God in all His creatures. Therefore, love is extended to all creatures. They represent this aspect of Islamic worldview very well. For example, a Sufi by the name Nûrî was overheard praying as follows: “O Lord, in your eternal knowledge and power and will You punish the people of Hell whom You have created; and if it be Your inexorable will to make Hell full of mankind, You are able to fill it with me alone, and to send them to paradise.”²⁴ Therefore, the spirit of law in Islamic worldview is moral consciousness grounded in love of God (*mahabbatullah*).

This approach gives a prominent position to human beings in Islamic worldview. The human psychology is very important for both law and morality. If moral obligation is grounded in a spiritual experience known as “love of God” this requires our knowledge of Him (*ma’rifatullah*). These concepts thus become prominent in the Value Structure which requires very rigorous analysis of human nature. As a result of this doctrinal extension of the idea of human being and his position in society the doctrinal concept of “human” in Islamic worldview requires a separate structure identified as “Human Structure”. In this structure we find not only the analysis of human nature but of society and social order as well. This gives us the political thought in this structure. We shall briefly evaluate it in relation to the existing culture which posed a challenge to Islam in this respect.

There was a relative equality among the Bedouins when Islam came. This equality was reinforced by their tribal organization, as we outlined above, not by an organized political system or a legal institution. The family ties were strong. Therefore, members of each group and in turn smaller or larger groups of families inherited certain economic and social solidarity which would establish for them a political prestige as well. Hereditary traits of any kind were the basis of decadent legal customs as well as for their political practices. This kind of an organization naturally leads to selfishness and individualism on a broader scheme because it encourages the member of the society to concentrate only on their own interests in the narrow sense, and on the interests of their community only in the broader sense.

Islam, therefore, introduced the concept of “brotherhood” to restore unity among the individuals of the community: “the believers are but a single brotherhood” (49/al-Hujurât, 10). This concept was supported by a general notion of “*ummah*” (nation or religious community) to provide unity among different societies which participate in the same religion. But the application of these concepts was carried out with so much precision and with so much divine intelligence (i.e., guidance) that with a small effort in a short period of time Islam achieved in uniting most of the peninsula tribes under one banner. If we keep in view the dynamic concept of *tawhîd* within the Islamic World Structure we shall understand that Islam views this unity as the reflection of the divine unity or “Oneness” (*tawhîd*) maintained in the religion. Besides this brotherly order within the community, Islam also emphasized humane feelings on the broader scale to do away with the generalized form of selfishness:

²³ Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, op. cit., 105.

²⁴ Ibid, 108.

We have thus made you a justly balanced community (*ummah*) over the nations; and the Apostle a witness over you. (2/al-Baqarah, 143)

Let there arise out of you one community calling to good, enjoining what is right and preventing what is wrong. (3/Âli ‘Imrân, 104)

You are the best community brought out for mankind enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong and believing in God. (3/Âli ‘Imrân, 110)

Also in his farewell sermon the prophet declared the equality of all men: “O people, God has taken from you the boasting of the Jâhiliyyah and its pride of ancestors. All men descend from Adam and Adam was made of dust.” Muslims as the morally sensitive felt that moral degeneration comes from ignorance. But ignorance based on arrogance from not knowing the Divine obligations, namely lacking the knowledge of the Revelation. For this reason any piece of information or malpractice of the decadent was called “Jâhiliyah”, namely “that which pertains to ignorance”. The Qur’ân needed to establish principles at this stage to represent the foundation of the Human Structure: “And of those whom We have created there is a nation who guides with the Truth and establishes justice with it.” (7/al-A’râf, 181); “Lo! Allah enjoins justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbids lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorts you in order that you may take heed.” (16/al-Nahl, 90); “Those who, if We give them power in the land, establish prescribed prayers (*salah*) and pay the poor-due (*zakah*) and enjoin right conduct and forbid evil. And with Allah rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs.” (22/al-Hajj, 41)

Once this foundation is well established then Islam’s attitude in other spheres of human existence, (such as law, politics, economics, literature, art and philosophy) becomes intelligible. In the legal sphere, for example, it establishes a system of justice based on moral principles which are underlined through divine revelation. The same is also true for a political sphere. Take early Islam; you will hardly find in it any principles for a political (or a legal) institution. This is because the foundation which Islam finds necessary for such institutions is not yet established. That is why the basis of political life is founded in Mecca but its practical principles and actual application began in Medina. The first written document of its kind in the Arabian civilization confirms this conclusion and also provides evidence for the Islamic attitude towards the Pre-Islamic Arabian political life. This document is the covenant signed by the Prophet and the inhabitants of Medina. It is rightly called the “Constitution of Medina”.²⁵ Ibn Ishâq outlines the principles of this covenant:²⁶

1. The Muslims and those who are undersigned in the document are one community (*umma*).
2. Each tribe of the community is responsible on behalf of its members for the retribution of a legal offense prescribed by their present custom.
3. Every member of the community must try to prevent crime, and should help each other in peace and war.
4. The Jewish tribes also belong to the community. They are free to exercise their own religion. They and Muslims should help each other when needed.

²⁵ See W. Montgomery Watt. *Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1980), 4.

²⁶ Ibn Ishaq, *op.cit.*, 1: 72; also IV; 251; Guillaume, 231ff., and 5.

5. Should any dispute or controversy that is likely to cause trouble arise it must be referred to God and His Apostle.
6. This document will not protect the wrong-doer or the unjust.

The document also proves that before the Prophet passed away the Human Structure was well established in the political as well as in the legal sphere. Especially the fifth article shows that Islam wants the control of the society in order to restore its own principles and values instead of the Jâhiliyyah culture. But again this control cannot totally eliminate every element of the existing culture. It thus preserved and adopted those practices in the political sphere which it rendered useful and good. An example of this is the institution of *shûrâ* (a consultative council or assembly) where the will of the people can be by representation. *Shûrâ* was a pre-Islamic practice which the Qur’ân adopted: “O Muhammad, consult them (the members of the community) in affairs” (3/Âli ‘Imrân, 159; also 42/al-Shûrâ, 38).

6. The Significance of Worldviews and their Function in Society

At all levels the change in worldviews is done gradually. When there is new, i.e. original knowledge it will affect a concept in the worldview of an individual. Since all concepts and structures of a worldview are related to each other that concept may incur change on another concept and so on. Supposing that the new knowledge does not affect any concept or idea in individuals’ worldviews; since there is continually a stream of new ideas and knowledge there will be necessarily some knowledge that will affect certain concept(s) or idea(s) in the worldview of individuals affected by the new moral and intellectual dynamism. Each time a concept or an idea is affected in worldviews there will be a need to revise it accordingly. If these revisions reach at a critical stage where it will affect the foundation of the worldview it will gradually transform every concept, idea and mentalities in it into the new conception of the foundation which is, as we have tried to show above the World Structure. In the meantime these developments may lead to the emergence of a Knowledge Structure in the dominant worldview of the society which will set it into lively and systematic learning activities which will gradually transform the society to the next stage in this historical process which we name the Stage of Problems.

When there is a worldview thus shaped by the knowledge circulating with its dynamic elements in the society the learned involved will discuss the *problems* they encounter or they are led by their worldview to issues with which they try to deal. This way only certain problems are discussed in a scattered manner. For this reason I would like to call this period in the scientific process of a scientific tradition the “Stage of Problems”. This is the initial stage in which a subject matter has become a candidate to emerge as a discipline. If the knowledge-seeking activities continue in a uniform manner, then this subject matter has a greater potentiality in its future to emerge as a science. However, before this subject matter emerges as a science, the knowledge-seeking activities at the Stage of Problems cannot be called *scientific activities*. This is because we have already restricted the usage of the term ‘science’ to such activities in which there is naming through scientific consciousness, which is the perception of the activities by those in search of knowledge as actually constituting a discipline. Obviously at the initial stage of the history of a science this consciousness cannot be found. For this reason it is more apt to call the scholarly activities at the Stage of Problems

‘knowledge-seeking activities’. It is at this stage that the knowledge-seeking activities lead to a formal institution of learning and as such gradually give rise to a knowledge tradition. For this reason, we may identify the Stage of Problems also as the “Stage of Knowledge Tradition” in the history of a scientific tradition.

We may conclude from this that a worldview is the continual combination of our experiences by the mind according to its rules and principles gradually forming a framework which is first identifiable as the life structure, and then as it further develops to such an extent that it can manifest certain mentalities, it can be entitled ‘worldview’. The worldview thus becomes the mental *environment* within which the mind operates. Therefore, our concept of worldview, in this context, refers to the conceptual totality as an attempt to grasp the universe, and as such a worldview is an architectonic whole, in which notions, ideas and beliefs are so interconnected that together they form a network of organized concepts. This network forms a coherent mental structure *naturally*, thanks to the constitution of our faculties of knowledge. It is primarily the function of our intellect to combine all the various data collected in the mind and form them into a coherent outlook. In doing so our knowledge system uses its inherent principles, such as the principle of contradiction, argumentation, and association and so on, to form the impressions that it receives from the outside world into a coherent unity, as a result of which arises a worldview. It is clear, therefore, that a worldview is not *necessarily constructed* by the individual, but rather it *arises* in the mind of the individual *necessarily*. A worldview is, therefore, a coherent network of ideas, conceptions, beliefs and aspirations in which all that make it up are organized in a coherent manner, but not necessarily in a *systematically* interconnected network (which is called ‘system’ in the philosophical sense).²⁷

It is also clear that the major environmental factors leading to the rise of a worldview in the mind of an individual are mainly culture, which includes such elements as religion, language, social environment and customs; abstract thought which includes the scientific activities and philosophical thought expressed as education; one’s psychology; and technology. Since these are precisely the major factors that form a worldview, through the natural operations of the mind, the individual does not have to make a conscious effort to construct a systematically organized worldview. A worldview may not be constructed, but rather it is formed *naturally* by the individual in a casual manner; we shall thus refer to this kind of a worldview as ‘natural worldview’, because the acquisition of its major components is regulated by the natural operations of the mind. But in the second and third cases, the worldview arises in the mind by a conscious use of the natural operations of the mind. As a result, the basic components of the worldview come into existence in the mind through investigation and search for knowledge. That is why many of the basic ideas, beliefs, outlooks and conceptions in it are clarified to the person trying to search for knowledge. Obviously this kind of a worldview is completely different from the natural one; we shall thus refer to it as ‘transparent worldview’.

A transparent worldview may also arise in two different ways: first, in an environment in which the dissemination of knowledge within the society takes place quasi-scientifically;

²⁷ For an elaboration and comparison of the concept of ‘system’ in relation to worldview, see the present author’s “A Concept of Philosophy in the Qur’anic Context”, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 11: 2 (1994), 170-4.

second, in a society where scientific knowledge regulates the dissemination of knowledge. A worldview formed in this way may be called “scientific worldview”. We may try to explain how this kind of a worldview emerges because it is important for our explanation of the function of worldviews.

First of all, in order for scientific knowledge to regulate the dissemination of knowledge, there must be a sophisticated mechanism for the production of scientific knowledge. This mechanism, above all, requires a well-equipped scientific conceptual scheme,²⁸ and a worldview that is suitable for the development of this scheme, assuming that this mechanism works well in a given society then some sophisticated scientific activities begin to exist. Obviously through time there will be an accumulation of scientific knowledge in that society. Besides this there will be a group of people, called ‘scientists’ (i.e., the ‘*ulama*’). But the knowledge put forward by those scientists utilizes a special language, in which many of the everyday words are not used anymore in their daily meaning; a specific scientific meaning is attached to them. Moreover, in certain disciplines, such as philosophy and theology, the concepts used are abstract. As a result, the general masses are unable to understand this knowledge, to which we have referred as ‘scientific knowledge’. But the community of scholars well understands the scientific knowledge and if an adequate network of communication is established between them, knowledge disseminates at this level directly and rapidly. Thus is formed the first stage in the process of the dissemination of knowledge which we shall call the ‘abstract level’. This group of scientists is called ‘*ulama*’²⁹ in the Islamic sense.

Secondly, either there will be or there arises, as a result of the emergence of scientific knowledge, in such a society, a group of people called ‘intellectuals’, such as men of literature, artists, architects, teachers and educators, who are educated and are able to understand the available scientific knowledge. The intellectuals are not scientists, nor are they scholars, but rather illuminated personalities who develop a transparent worldview within an environment of scientific activities. Therefore, they are able to express and clearly define terms and concepts that occupy a prominent place in their worldview; such concepts may be, for example, God, the universe, knowledge, science, the meaning of life, good, evil, freedom, justice, and many other moral, religious, political, educational and social terms. At this level, since the intellectuals are able to understand the scientific knowledge developed by the ‘*ulama*’, they will naturally reflect it in their works, because their worldview is already shaped within that knowledge. Hence, we may term this level in the dissemination of knowledge the ‘concretized level’. Since the works of the intellectuals are usually of a concrete nature, the scientific knowledge is concretized and thus handed down to the general masses who can understand the concrete ideas more easily.

Finally, at the third stage, the knowledge thus far produced enters into a massive dissemination through the educational institutions and mass media. This is possible through

²⁸ What we mean by this will be clarified in the following section on the inner framework.

²⁹ What we mean by the term ‘*ulama*’ (singular ‘*ilm*’) is primarily ‘scholars of Islam’, which includes all scholars, such as philosophers, theologians, physicists, chemists and astronomers, who carry out their scientific activities within the Islamic worldview. Therefore, we do not mean merely its contemporary usage, which includes only the traditional Islamic scholars as a class of *clergy* which is indeed a corrupt usage.

the work of scientists and intellectuals, because all the educational institutions are formed in accordance with the knowledge put forward by them. When the scientific knowledge thus disseminates from the top level of abstraction to the bottom level of concretization, it reaches to the masses and begins shaping their worldview according to its well-defined and systematically developed concepts, ideas and doctrines, namely, according to a *system*, developed by the ‘*ulama*’. When a transparent worldview is thus formed in accordance with the system developed by the ‘*ulama*’, it is called ‘scientific worldview’; and this way of *worldview-formation* we call ‘scientific worldview-formation’. Therefore, by the scientific development of a worldview, we mean the “inculcation of its major components, i.e., its concepts, ideas and beliefs, to the individuals of the society through clear and transparent definitions and a systematically organized body of knowledge.”

The *scientific worldview-formation* is not the only way in which transparent worldviews may be formed in the minds of the individuals. For, there may be other ways for the rise of such worldviews in the minds of individuals. We shall not discuss all such possible ways here, but only allude to one of those ways in which historically speaking it occurred in our civilization. This is the Islamic worldview as established by the Prophet in Mecca, through the Qur’ān. Since the Muslim community as such did not exist at that time, we cannot talk of any scientific knowledge within the newly emerging society. As a result, the formation of the transparent Islamic worldview took place differently. This process of the Islamic worldview-formation was very much similar to the scientific worldview-formation, and as such can be called ‘quasi-scientific worldview-formation’. As we know from history each time a new Revelation came, the Prophet explained it to his community and each term and idea thus revealed found a clear definition and a proper place within the Islamic worldview. Hence, since the way the Islamic worldview was established in its original form in the first Muslim community is similar to scientific worldviews, we may call all worldviews that arise in this way in the minds of individuals ‘*quasi-scientific worldviews*’.

What distinguishes the transparent worldviews from the natural ones is the dynamism they induce to the individuals in whose mind they are formed. This is clear from the historical world phenomenon exhibited by the early Muslims who once possessed the Islamic worldview they became world leaders in culture, science and civilization. But the worldviews these people had before Islam can be defined as *natural* which lacked the adequate dynamism to give to the individuals of that society. In such a mental framework no scientific activity would have ever been possible. We must also point out that what makes worldviews dynamic, invigorating and stimulating is the continual renewal through scientific or quasi-scientific activities of the same kind which established the original Islamic worldview. If these activities of renewal cease to exist the transparent worldview can gradually turn into a natural worldview in which scientific and civilizational activities also cease.

7.CONCLUSION

Our exposition shows that some aspects of worldviews are the same in every civilization and society, though some other aspects may be different. For example, although the Islamic worldview and the Greek worldview are utterly different, the way they arise in the

mind of an individual in their respective societies is identical, and the way they function within their societies is the same. Since we assert this in the epistemological sense, we may illustrate this point by referring to the way the human stomach functions in relation to the human body, as this is the case with the human mind in relation to knowledge. Some of these points, together with the process of worldview-formation, will become clear as we try to demonstrate the function of worldviews.

In the foregoing discussion we have tried to distinguish two kinds of transparent worldviews: quasi-scientific and scientific, both of which tend to give certain dynamism to their society, out of which they flourish. This dynamism inherent in scientific worldviews is so crucial that even the mentality dominant in a certain society may emerge out of the worldview dominant in that society.³⁰ Whitehead expresses this fact so clearly: “...the mentality of an epoch springs from the view of the world which is, in fact, dominant in the educated sections of the communities in question.”³¹

The most significant dynamism concerning us here is that dynamism channeled towards scientific activities. We may show this fact by pointing out that in a worldview there are structures, which, once well-defined and clarified, give a stamina and motivation to the ideals of those structures. In this sense, the most significant structure that comes to the fore is the knowledge-structure, which supports, and thus acts within that worldview, as the ground of scientific activities. In order to show this we must clarify how structures arise in a worldview and how they function within it.

Worldviews, therefore, function primarily as general schemes through which we perceive everything, including ourselves. In this respect, their function is to put our conception into a unified whole. Whenever we philosophize, or construct a theory, we inevitably and necessarily, by the very nature of our mind, presuppose a worldview. This function of worldviews is elaborated here with regard to the nature of our faculty of knowledge, and hence, it can be designated as the ‘epistemological function’. I hope that my brief analysis of the Qur’anic outlook leading to a quasi-scientific worldview explains sufficiently its function in the life of Muslim societies.

³⁰For an exposition of what is meant by the ‘dominant worldview’ see my “A Concept of Philosophy in the Qur’anic Context”, op. cit., 176.

³¹Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World (SMW)* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), vii.